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Nixon, Kennedy Clash Over Spy Plane Issue

By a Star Staff Writer

CHICAGO, July 30. — The first controversy between Vice President Nixon and Senator Kennedy of Massachusetts in the 1960 presidential campaign boiled up today over the U-2 incident.

Mr. Nixon refused to back down on his charge that his Democratic rival had suggested President Eisenhower apologize to Soviet Premier Nikita S. Khrushchev for the spy flight over Russia.

Mr. Nixon made the charge in his acceptance speech Thursday night when he accused Senator Kennedy of making "a rash and impulsive" statement after the U-2 incident led to the breakup of the summit conference in Paris.

Former Gov. Thomas E. Dewey of New York, another one of the Republican orators at the convention, made the same charge earlier.

Denies Using "Apologize"

Senator Kennedy at Hyannis Port, Mass., yesterday denied he used the word "apologize" and said both Mr. Nixon and Mr. Dewey "knew that very well."

Herbert G. Klein, the Vice President's press assistant, said the Republican nominee was only taking Senator Kennedy at his own words when he used the expression "apologize" in the acceptance speech.

He said Senator Kennedy himself had used the word in a Senate speech May 23 after he had come under heavy Republican fire for his comments on the U-2 incident during a campaign trip through Oregon.

He was reported as saying that Mr. Eisenhower should have expressed regrets for the spy flights over Russia in order to save the summit conference from collapse.

He later took the Senate floor to elaborate on what he had said.

Cites Congressional Record

In conveying Mr. Nixon's decision to stand by the word "apologize," Mr. Klein cited this statement made by Senator Kennedy and taken from the Congressional Record:

"Once the summit had broken up and once Mr. Khrushchev indicated his refusal to continue, I don't think the United States could -- but -- and there were two conditions for continuing.

"One was, we apologize. I think that might have been possible to do. Second, that we try those responsible for the flight.

"We could not do that. It would be highly unfair because the flight had been authorized and therefore that was a condition. Mr. Khrushchev knew we couldn't meet and then it indicated he wanted to break it up.

Repeats Denial

"If he had merely said that the United States should express regrets then that would have been a reasonable term. To say that we should try those involved--quite obviously that meant he wanted to break it up and we had no alternative but let him do so."

Mr. Klein pointed out that the Vice President in his speech had told Senator Kennedy he had suggested the President "should" apologize and, in his Senate comments on May 23, Senator Klein had used the word "should." The Vice President could not see any difference in the two, Mr. Klein added.

In his Hyannis Port comments yesterday, Senator Kennedy was reported as saying:

"I did not know he used 'apologize' which is what Mr. Nixon and Mr. Dewey both used. I say I know that because when we were calculating whether we have been successful, I regret if it could have been a summit meeting."

"There is one difference. Mr. Nixon used the word 'apologize' and Mr. Nixon used the word 'apologize.' Both Mr. Nixon and Mr. Dewey knew that very well."